

# Assessing SVQs: using a portfolio

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# 1. Introduction to portfolio-building

## Organising portfolios

A portfolio of evidence for an SVQ (Scottish Vocational Qualification), or other SQA award, is a collection of evidence which helps to prove that a candidate can meet the national standards the qualification is based on. This guide is for candidates who will be required to generate and collect evidence from their work and their other activities, and build this up into a portfolio when being assessed for an SVQ.

Because of the nature of the tasks being performed, assessing qualifications below level 3 is a straightforward process. The tasks are generally routine and self-contained, and in many cases they can be directly observed by an assessor.

Assessing at Level 3 and above, though, is more difficult as the duties and responsibilities of candidates at these levels are more complex. The candidates may, for example, have supervisory responsibilities and may require decision-making and complex problem-solving skills. The diversity of the activities involved usually means that, apart from any other consideration, it would be far too costly to assess competence at this level by direct observation alone.

This means that, if you are a candidate at level 3 or above, you will need to find ways of organising and presenting evidence of your competence in a format that enables an assessor to evaluate it. A well-structured portfolio is a particularly effective way of doing this:

- it allows you to manage your own development more efficiently
- it can easily be accessed and managed by assessors

Responsibility for developing the portfolio stays firmly with you, the candidate, but it is very important that you have continuous help and support. This help can come from a range of people, including line managers and colleagues, specially designated mentors or advisers, tutors, and assessors.

At this point it is, perhaps, worth clarifying the roles of assessors, mentors and candidates in portfolio-building. More detailed information can be found in SQA's Assessment and Quality Assurance Guides.

### Note

Throughout this guide some terms which might not be familiar to you are used, and some words are used in a specialised way. There is a glossary, which begins on page 39, explaining these. Where they occur for the first time in the text they are given in **bold italics**.

# Roles and responsibilities

## Candidates

You must know the *standards* thoroughly, since you are responsible for selecting the evidence which proves your competence.

You will need to consider how evidence can be generated. This will involve:

- planning your assessment activities with the assessor
- matching your activities to the standards
- identifying ways of providing lasting records of your achievements
- getting comment and feedback from others and saving all the relevant information
- recording evidence efficiently and in an agreed format
- cross-referencing recorded information
- making sure your evidence is **tangible, current** and **assessable**

## Mentors

*Mentors* (or advisers) have a key role. They can provide encouragement, reassurance and support to candidates facing new and very different approaches to development and assessment.

Mentors may come from within your *organisation* or from the *centre* which is helping you work through your development programme. They do not have a formal role or responsibility in assessment, but can act as an objective source of comment or guidance.

They can help you to reflect on your activities and suggest ways in which development can take place. They can support you through the process of portfolio-building, and help you to identify possible sources of evidence. They may also, depending on their role or involvement with you, *authenticate* some of the evidence (ie endorse it as genuine evidence of your activities).

## Assessors

The role of the assessor is to check the evidence which you present for:

- *validity* (he or she checks that it really is evidence of the competence being assessed)
  - *sufficiency* (he or she checks that it covers all the Performance Criteria and range, including knowledge and understanding, required by the national standards)
  - *authenticity* (he or she checks that it reflects your own performance)
- and
- *currency* (he or she checks that you still have the skills assessed)

If a problem is identified, an assessor may seek further evidence from you, suggest how the evidence can be supplied, or refer you back to your mentor for further help and guidance.

Assessors need to be able to give you feedback which is based solely on the national standard being assessed. This feedback needs to be:

- clear
  - specific
  - concise
- and
- designed to encourage further development

Assessors have a difficult role to play. They are responsible for the quality of assessment, and at the same time they must be fair and objective and provide you with positive comment.

## The context of portfolio production

Once you have registered for an SVQ, your first task will be to carry out an analysis of your own *competence* against the national standards the award is based on. Assessors and mentors will play a supporting role here.

Once you have done this analysis, you will have to plan your development. There are two closely connected processes:

- **identifying current competence**  
If you already have the knowledge, understanding and skills the SVQ requires, the portfolio-building process consists of gathering evidence of this, and comparing it to the national standards.
- **development**  
If your analysis shows that you do not yet have the knowledge, understanding and skills required, you will have to undertake training and development, and then gather evidence that you have achieved competence.

In practice, most candidates will use a mixture of both routes. Whichever route is taken, the end result is the same.

## Summary

The candidate is the central figure in the assessment process. You, supported by the assessor or mentor, are responsible for:

- stage one: **identifying sources of evidence**
- stage two: **generating and collecting the evidence**
- stage three: **presenting the evidence for assessment**

The remaining sections of this guide are designed to help you to devise a clear and coherent portfolio of evidence by following this three-stage approach.

## 2. Identifying sources of evidence

The evidence in the portfolio will usually come from three main sources:

### Evidence from the candidate's own work

The most important source of evidence will be your own performance at work (or in the conditions of work). Both the *products* (what is done) and the *processes* (the way it is done) of work can be used as evidence and might include:

- goods or services produced
- reports
- memos
- minutes
- records of activities
- notes of action
- records of projects
- staff objectives
- contracts
- business plans
- budgets
- quotations
- purchase specifications
- advertisements
- letters
- job specifications and job descriptions
- training plans
- development logs or authenticated reports you have prepared
- video or audio recordings of your performance

### Evidence supplied by others

Evidence of your performance may be gathered from various other people, eg line managers, previous employers, colleagues, customers, suppliers or staff.

The evidence might include:

- appraisal reports
- staff or team meeting minutes
- references or memos
- letters of validation
- market research
- customer surveys
- evaluation seminars

People who supply this evidence are often referred to as 'witnesses' and their evidence as *witness testimony*. An example of witness testimony might be where a mentor is collecting evidence of your competence, and records your activities for the assessor's benefit.

It is always important to keep a record of:

- who the witness is
- his or her relationship to you
- the witness's occupational competence
- the witness's familiarity with the national standards and the processes of assessment

## Evidence supplied by an assessor

Assessors are highly reliable witnesses in their own right and their testimonies can be recorded like any others.

There are three main situations where the assessor can contribute directly to the portfolio:

- **observation** — the assessor records the details of the competent performance.
- **reports** — the assessor questions you and produces a record of the questions and your answers.
- **setting specific tasks** — projects to generate evidence where none exists within the current work role. This might be reported on by you, witnesses or the assessor

## Types of evidence

Wherever possible you should produce evidence from activities which occur naturally within your normal work roles. To cover the whole standard, however, it may be necessary to consider special projects or assignments, secondment to another department, or placement in another organisation. *Simulations* may also be used, but these must be carefully prepared so that they reproduce the actual circumstances of the workplace, including its unexpected *contingencies*. For more information on these methods of assessment, see the SQA Assessment and Quality Assurance Guides.

### Performance evidence

Some kinds of evidence can be gathered through direct observation by the assessor. There might also be video or audio recordings; photographs or observation by colleagues, managers, or others who may be involved in the process. This type of evidence is commonly called *performance evidence* and it is the main kind of evidence required. It may include the products of your work activities as well.

It is highly unlikely that you will be able to perform every task that is required of you (these are called *Performance Criteria*) in every circumstance the qualification requires (the *range*) via performance evidence alone — this can be costly and time consuming, and may distract you too much from your work role. You will usually need to supplement performance evidence in some other way.

This can be done by:

- the assessor questioning you to establish your knowledge and understanding or to explore an area where performance evidence is not sufficient
- using witness testimony from managers and colleagues (see the **Witness Testimony Sheet** on page 12)
- using work-based assignments and case studies to support performance evidence
- including historical evidence, eg certificates and details of courses attended, as well as work produced in previous situations, to show your knowledge in a particular area (eg health and safety) and support evidence from your current activities

## Candidate's reports and personal statements

Performance statements prepared by you can help to describe and demonstrate your approach to work and understanding of it. These should be used only where it is necessary to support the performance evidence.

These reports need to be confirmed or authenticated by questioning by the assessor or by other evidence. If well constructed, though, they can be a primary source of evidence of knowledge and understanding — they ask you not only to report on your performance but to analyse it in terms of:

- **what** you did
  - **why** you did it in a particular way
- and
- **what** you would have done if certain common contingencies had arisen

## Case studies

Where some aspects of the **range** are inaccessible to you or are impractical to set up or simulate, case studies may be presented. These involve the assessor describing a scenario, followed by contingencies, which you are then required to analyse.

Again, the authenticity of case studies as evidence depends on their being confirmed by performance evidence from other parts of the range.

## The importance of planning

You will probably have to identify so many different pieces of evidence that adequate planning is a must. Using a grid like that on the following page can help in this process. The grid itself is not a piece of evidence, so it will not end up in the portfolio. It is, however, a very useful planning document.

It might be useful to consider an example taken from SVQ Retailing level 3 and 4.

### Unit 6 — Monitoring Security and Losses within Area of Responsibility

The Unit consists of 3 Elements:

- 6.1 Organise and implement the stocktake within area of responsibility.
- 6.2 Contribute to the maintenance of security in the retail unit.
- 6.3 Monitor losses and investigate identified problems within areas of responsibility.

The **range** situations include:

Stocktaking systems — internal/external, manual/computerised etc

Security systems and procedures:

- bombs, robbery
- staffing, equipment, etc
- losses, such as wastage, breakages, theft, etc

This planning process can be completed for a whole Unit or for one Element, if that proves necessary.

## Planning document for identifying evidence

### Unit no. 6 Monitoring Security and the Losses within Area of Responsibilities

	Evidence				Evidence			
	Observed Performance	Finished Products	Documentation/Records	Photographs Video/Audio Recordings	Assessor Questioning	Project Assignments Case Studies	Testimony - Line Managers - Colleagues - Others	Personal Statement
normal workplace activities	Setting Alarm Systems - Key Control	Staff Rotas Till Records	- Stocktake Procedures - Stocktake Sheets - Theft Procedures - Security Procedures	Photographs of Notices  - Security - Emergency etc			Line Manager Report	Statement of Responsibility
Special activities			(H. Office)  - Insurance Documents - Cash Loss Forecast		Assessor Report  - Stocktaking - Implications of losses - Emergency - Procedures	- Data Protection Act - Break-in case study		
previous experience			Bomb threat procedures Statement (previous job)			Customer Theft (Training Course 1980)	Ex employer letter of validation	

Candidate's name: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Summary

You **must** be thoroughly familiar with the standards before **planning** to gather evidence.

Evidence may be generated from a variety of sources and can take different forms. It might not always be obvious to you at first glance which items can be of value — an objective view, from a mentor for example, will help in selecting useful evidence.

## **Important things to consider when selecting evidence:**

- The evidence must show that you have performed to the standards set out in the **Element** by the **Performance Criteria**, and demonstrate that you are able to perform across the **range** of circumstances or situations stated. Separate evidence of **knowledge and understanding** will often be required.
- The examples chosen should be those that are best at showing how you performed.
- It is only necessary to refer to the work of others (eg your staff or colleagues) if it relates to your own competence. It may be helpful if you include a brief description of your involvement in activities which involve others, and for that description to be authenticated by a third party (eg a mentor or supervisor).
- The evidence must be **sufficient** to allow the assessor to infer that you are competent.

# 3. Compiling the evidence

## Gathering and evaluating evidence

Once the evidence has been identified (and this may be done Unit-by-Unit or Element-by-Element), it needs to be gathered and evaluated before it is recorded in the portfolio.

Since the portfolio of evidence is designed to prove your competence, the assessor must be able to see evidence of **how** you performed in relation to an entire Element, satisfying all the Performance Criteria across the range of circumstances or applications stated in the standards.

## The importance of selection

The task of generating and collecting evidence for a portfolio is a new experience for many candidates and there is a temptation to include everything that **might** be of value. However, if an item does not show **how** you performed then it may not be relevant at all.

You should always ask the question ‘**What does this prove?**’ and try to select evidence which you are proud of and which shows you have done well. This will ensure good evidence, covering significant performances. **The best portfolios are not necessarily the heaviest.**

It may be helpful to use some kind of evidence evaluation form, like the one on page 11. The evaluation form can be included in the portfolio along with those pieces of evidence which you have considered good enough.

### Currency

The assessor has to determine that you are competent **now** and will continue to be in the foreseeable future. To show this, evidence must be **current**. It should be as recent as possible, though this will depend on the nature of the evidence (you can show how recent it is by making sure that all pieces of evidence in the portfolio bear the date of their origination).

In management, for example, some activities, like meetings, may happen frequently, and evidence relating to them could be very recent. Other activities, such as recruiting staff, will occur less frequently, and in these cases you may need to fall back on previous experience.

The recognition of previous achievements raises particular issues of currency. If, for instances, legislation has changed since the previous activity, this item of evidence would have to be supported by evidence of your awareness of present legislation and how it would affect **current** practice at work.

### Authenticity

It is essential to ensure that the evidence provided has been generated by you, the candidate. This is particularly true when the evidence relates to a team effort, or when you are responsible for the activity but do not actually produce the evidence, as might happen in many managerial activities. The evidence must be presented in a way that allows your contribution to be identified, and it must relate to your own competence. The assessor will need to ensure that evidence is authenticated by means of an endorsement by your line manager or colleagues, or by observing you or by questioning you. In some situations, your role and

responsibility may need to be described precisely to confirm the authenticity of the evidence. This description must be signed by the appropriate parties (eg line manager or supervisor).

### **Sufficiency of evidence**

Taken as a whole, the evidence (including eg observation by the assessor, witness testimony and questioning) must match the **whole standard** and enable an assessor to infer that you are **consistently competent**.

The best evidence is direct observation by the assessor. To support this, the assessor only needs to establish that you perform consistently.

Where the evidence depends on witness testimony alone, this needs to be **authenticated**. Independent witnesses who are occupationally competent and familiar with the national standards will provide evidence which is almost as good as an assessor's. Other witnesses may not be familiar with the national standards or might not be working in the occupation covered. The poorer the evidence, the more supporting evidence will be required.

It is a good idea to seek information on the witness's status and occupational competence at the same time as recording his or her testimony. One way of doing this is using a **Witness Testimony Sheet** (as shown on page 12).

### **Validity**

The evidence you present must be relevant to the Unit you are undertaking and must satisfy the relevant Element and Performance Criteria. However, it is worth noting that one piece of evidence in a portfolio can be used to prove competence against more than one Element (and often against many — see the section on cross-referencing below, page 24).

### **Confidentiality**

There are some circumstances where you (or your organisation) might have good reasons for not wishing original evidence to be viewed by others, (eg by assessors from another organisation). In these cases it may be necessary for key figures or references to be blanked out. It might, in these cases, be simpler to seek other sources of evidence.

## **Linking with development**

When you are scheduling evidence generation and collection, you should take the following into account:

- your interests and enthusiasms
- your work activities and rhythms of work
- formal and informal developmental activities, such as assignments and courses

This again underlines the importance of **planning**.

## **Summary**

Compiling the portfolio is in itself a development activity and should be candidate-centred and well planned. The evidence which is collected should be:

- significant
- authentic
- current
- valid
- sufficient

All this requires planning, which, again, is a development activity in itself.

## Evidence evaluation checklist

<u>Evidence currently being evaluated</u>	<u>Notes for further evidence collection</u>
<p>a) Evidence relates to the element</p> <p>b) All Performance Criteria are covered</p> <p>c) All the range is covered</p> <p>d) Underpinning knowledge is covered</p>	

## Witness testimony sheet

Candidate's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact address and tel: \_\_\_\_\_

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I can confirm that I have seen ..... perform the activities listed below to the national standards.

I have (not) had, in the normal course of events, the opportunity to examine documentation or other products of the candidates normal work activities.

### Notes

A copy of the appropriate national standard is attached for reference.

*Units* are groups of assessable competences; *Performance Criteria* indicate the level to which the candidate should perform; *range* indicates the breadth of contexts in which they should perform competently and **knowledge and understanding** indicates they can transfer their competence to other contexts.

Unit title: \_\_\_\_\_

Element: \_\_\_\_\_

Performance criteria	Range	Knowledge and understanding

Element: \_\_\_\_\_

Performance criteria	Range	Knowledge and understanding

Relationship to candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

- a) Are the activities listed in the national standards a normal part of your activities or those of people answerable to you? **YES/NO**
  
- b) Are you familiar with the content and layout of the national standards? **YES/NO**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# 4. Presenting the evidence

## The need for organisation

This last section is designed to guide you on portfolio building, and offers a structured approach to presenting evidence for assessment.

The diagram on the next page shows an overview of the model structure of a portfolio. On the pages which follow are brief descriptions of each component along with sample templates which have been used successfully by many candidates working towards SVQs.

You may wish to use other forms of portfolio presentation. This will be acceptable to SQA, so long as:

- the relevant information on yourself and the other parties is clearly given
- evidence is clearly labelled and dated
- an assessor can find his or her way from a piece of evidence to the appropriate part(s) of the national standards, and vice versa

## Structure of a portfolio

**Title page**

**Information on the  
organisation**

**Information on the  
candidate**

**Information on  
contributors**

**Explanation of  
referencing system**

**Glossary of terms and  
abbreviations used**

**Summary matrix**

**Explanation of how  
evidence claims relate  
to elements**

**Index of evidence**

**Pieces of evidence  
with evaluation**

## **Title page**

This page identifies you as the candidate, with your name given fully and correctly, as it will appear on the SVQ certificate. Contact information — address, telephone number etc — also needs to be included.

This page should also tell the assessor which award and level you are presenting evidence for, and which Units are being submitted.

**Title page**

**Candidate's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel no:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SVQ:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Units submitted for assessment:**

**Mentor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adviser/assessor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Information on the organisation**

Assessors may well see portfolios from a variety of candidates who demonstrate their competence in many different settings, eg in factories, offices or building firms.

The assessor will need background information on the setting in which you operate. This information should include:

- the name of the organisation
- its address or location
- type of business
- size of operation
- the structure of the organisation
- staff numbers

Any PR or publicity material the organisation produces can also be helpful.

If you are not currently employed, or are not employed in a role appropriate to the SVQ, you will need to describe the contexts in which you have generated the evidence, such as previous employment, or working for community or charity organisations.

## **Information on the organisation**

**Name of organisation:**

**Address:**

**Type of business:**

**Staff:**

**Organisational structure:**

## Information on the candidate

You need to give information on the role within which you have demonstrated your competence.

**Relevant** information on your previous roles and on your current situation should be given. (CVs or job descriptions could be included). Your position in the structure and lines of responsibility should also be shown (a chart or diagram may be useful).

It may be appropriate to include details of previous **relevant** qualifications or certificates, particularly when you are trying to demonstrate underpinning knowledge and understanding.

## **Information on the candidate**

**Description of current role:**

**Previous experience:**

**Lines of responsibility:**

**Relevant qualifications:**

## **Information on contributors**

It is usual to find the same names appearing again and again in a portfolio either as signatories on letters, memos etc or as individuals who have been involved in your activities, eg:

- line manager
- colleagues
- customers or suppliers
- administration staff
- mentor
- assessor

It is helpful to include a list of these people and to give a description of their involvement with you.

### Information on contributors

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job title</b>	<b>involvement with me</b>
<b>S Cain</b>	<b>Operations Director</b>	<b>Line Manager</b>
<b>C Robertson</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Staff Member in my department</b>
<b>J McDonald</b>	<b>Personnel Manager</b>	<b>Colleague</b>
<b>Rev V Jones</b>	<b>Community Liaison Worker</b>	<b>Working alongside me in Community Networking ventures</b>

## **Explanation of referencing system**

Cross-referencing the evidence effectively can be the key to a smooth assessment process. Every Performance Criterion within each Element must be cross-referenced to the evidence in the portfolio.

The evidence needs to be given a label (eg a number or letter) so it can be referred to from an initial list, matrix (see below) or statement. Where it is necessary to direct the assessor to a particular point in the document, you can do this using paragraph numbers, colour coding, highlighting or some kind of symbol. Whatever method is used, you should explain it to the assessor.

## Explanation of referencing system

Referencing method	Example
- numbering of evidence	001, 002, 003, 004
- symbols used to locate exact point in portfolio where proof of Performance Criterion lies	♥29: evidence is identified by ♥ on p29  ♦58: evidence is identified by ♦ on P58

## **Glossary of terms and abbreviations used**

You should not make any assumptions about the assessor's understanding of technical terms and abbreviations. Assessors will find it difficult to judge the evidence if they do not understand the documentary evidence, so you need to explain any jargon, special terms and abbreviations you use at work, even when these seem quite familiar to you.

## Glossary of terms and abbreviations

<b>Terms/abbreviations</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
FHSA	Family Health Service Authority
DCM	Document Control Manual
P B X 600	Model number of latest product that the organisation manufacturers
SO1	Senior Officer 1 — The internal grade which a Head of Department holds.

## **Summary matrix**

A summary matrix (or summary statement) is simply a method of directing the assessor to the location of the evidence.

The matrix provides a visual means of cross-referencing the evidence to the element and Performance Criteria to which it applies. An assessor can then see clearly where all the sources of evidence supplied in the portfolio to any given standard lie.

The example of a matrix has space for a brief description of each item of evidence, followed by tick boxes for each element of each Unit being assessed — the first four Units have two Elements, the fifth has three, and so on. If this system is used, it is usually necessary to include personal statements (see page 34) to put the evidence in context and link it together coherently.



## **Evidence claim**

In addition to the summary matrix, you should produce a summary ‘evidence claim’ which tells the assessor what kind of evidence you are offering against each Performance Criterion in every Element. It will include the portfolio reference numbers as a ‘signpost’ to the appropriate evidence.

An example of an evidence statement is given on the next page.

**Evidence claim**

Candidate's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit number: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit title: \_\_\_\_\_

Element number: \_\_\_\_\_

No	Content Brief description of evidence	Range item(s) Covered	Performance Criteria														
			a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o

## **Index of evidence**

This section of the portfolio should list items of evidence, assigning each item a reference number. This will enable items of evidence to be used more than once and to be cross-referenced from different Elements and Performance Criteria.

## **Index of evidence**

<b>No</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>01</b>	<b>Quality Audit Report and Recommendation</b>
<b>02</b>	<b>Staff Development Plans</b>
<b>03</b>	<b>Financial Planning Notes and Memos</b>
<b>04</b>	<b>Witness Testimony — T Jones (Staff Member)</b>
<b>05</b>	<b>Audio Recording 20/2/92 — Staff Meeting</b>
<b>06</b>	<b>(etc)</b>
<b>07</b>	
<b>08</b>	
<b>09</b>	
<b>10</b>	
<b>11</b>	
<b>12</b>	
<b>13</b>	

## **Personal statement**

A personal statement (sometimes called a ‘storyboard’) should explain a piece of evidence, the context from which it was drawn and your role in it, leading the assessor through the evidence and showing what you actually did. This document can be valuable in helping you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding and how the range was covered, and it can minimise expensive and time consuming questioning by the assessor.

Personal statements can be written for each piece of evidence, and may relate to several Elements. Examples are given overleaf.

A personal statement is, of course, a piece of evidence in itself and should be referenced and filed with the evidence to which it refers.

**Personal statement**

**Element no:** 1234567.1

**Element title:** *Lead meetings and group discussions to solve problems and make decisions*

**OR**

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

Evidence for this element was gained from 4 main sources:

- Quality circles (weekly)
- Formal Management meetings (weekly)
- Informal staff meetings (as required)
- Community network meetings (monthly)

In all the situations stated above I chaired the meetings and had responsibility for preparing agendas, sending out invitations, recording and circulating minutes (except for the informal meetings where we simply record action points) and co-ordinating the activities arising from the meetings.

All evidence for this Element was gained from meetings held during the past year.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## **Personal statement**

**Element no:**

**Element title:**

**OR**

**Activity:** COMMUNITY NETWORK MEETINGS

**Comments:**

The company have always had strong links with the community. In the past this has taken the form of irregular meetings usually to promote a particular project or to address problems that have arisen.

However, six months ago the company felt that to improve their profile it would be advisable to formalise this. We have been instrumental in creating this forum to assist and support local enterprise and in particular young people, school leavers, etc.

Various representative from the community have been visited by myself including schools, colleges, local voluntary organisations, etc. The meetings are held monthly and are already proving to be very effective, resulting in work experience placements for school children and a project for young people to be held later in the year.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## Finally

It is important to ensure that, when a portfolio is presented for final assessment, the assessor can readily see:

- which Outcomes are being claimed
- your role in producing the evidence and the context in which it was produced
- the range of competence and the knowledge and understanding that is being claimed
- exactly how each Performance Criterion associated with each Element of competence has been met

Once you and your mentor are happy that the portfolio is ready for final assessment, it should be submitted to the assessor. The assessor may wish to interview you to talk through the evidence or clarify any concerns. The assessor will examine the portfolio and may ask you to produce further evidence. If the assessment confirms that the evidence presented in the portfolio is complete, valid and sufficient to infer that you are competent, then certification for the Unit or full SVQ can be arranged.

By developing a portfolio as suggested in this guide, you and your mentor should be able to ensure that the evidence gathered is of high quality, accessible and well-organised. It will assist in promoting a smooth and efficient assessment process. It will also constitute a powerful development tool in its own right.

# Glossary

<b>assessment</b>	The process of evaluating your work to see whether you are <i>competent</i> as defined by national <i>standards</i> .
<b>assessor</b>	The person who decides whether the evidence you produce shows you to be <i>competent</i> according to the <i>standards</i> and recording this decision. He or she can also decide that you need to produce more evidence, or that you need to undertake further development.
<b>authenticity</b>	Of evidence — it belongs to, or has been originated by, you.
<b>authentication</b>	The process by which a <i>mentor</i> or <i>assessor</i> confirms that your evidence is genuinely yours, and that all the rules of assessment have been observed.
<b>case study</b>	An exercise set by an assessor for you to demonstrate your <i>competence</i> in areas of the <i>range</i> where <i>observation</i> is not feasible. A scenario is described, and you are given instructions prompting you to analyse the situation, draw conclusions and suggest courses of action.
<b>centre</b>	The training body, college, learning centre or similar which is providing your training.
<b>competence</b>	Your ability to carry out certain tasks to the predetermined <i>standards</i> on which the award is based.
<b>contingency</b>	An unusual or non-routine occurrence in the workplace (eg an emergency) which might, nevertheless, be expected to form a necessary part of your working activities, and which you must know how to deal with.
<b>currency</b>	Lasting <i>competence</i> — if your competence was proved some time ago, you have to demonstrate that you are still competent and have not forgotten what you knew.
<b>development</b>	Training or similar activities.
<b>element</b>	One of the specific tasks which make up the <i>standard</i> and which you have to be able to perform to prove your <i>competence</i> .
<b>mentor</b>	Someone who has agreed or been chosen to advise you as you collect evidence of your competence. He or she may also <i>authenticate</i> the evidence.
<b>observation</b>	A method of assessment in which the assessor watches you at work and decides whether you are performing your tasks to the <i>standards</i> .

<b>organisation</b>	The firm you work for, and the context in which you are providing your competence. If you are not employed, or not employed in a role appropriate to the qualification, this could be the same as the <i>centre</i> where you are taking your qualification.
<b>performance criteria</b>	Statements which describe the level of competence to which the task set out in the <i>element</i> has to be performed.
<b>performance evidence</b>	Evidence derived from your workplace, often the results of direct <i>observation</i> by the assessor, also including the <i>products</i> and <i>processes</i> of your work.
<b>process</b>	The way in which you carry out your work; the steps you go through in completing a task. It will provide evidence of the skills you use and your thought processes.
<b>product</b>	Something you make or do during or as the result of an assessment activity, and which can be evaluated by your assessor.
<b>range (range statement)</b>	A set of circumstances in which you have to demonstrate your competence to gain the Unit.
<b>simulation</b>	An assessment which reproduces the conditions of the workplace, or conditions which you might expect to occur in the workplace.
<b>standard</b>	A group of statements which define the tasks which a particular job consists of, and the level of <i>competence</i> at which they should be carried out.
<b>sufficiency</b>	Evidence is sufficient when it proves that you have demonstrated actual competence.
<b>validity</b>	Evidence is valid when it relates to the Performance Criteria or Element which is being claimed ie when it proves or supports your claim to competence in that particular task.
<b>witness testimony</b>	Support for your claim to <i>competence</i> from a third party (who could be your mentor, a customer, manager or colleague).

## Appendix 1

### Useful SQA Publications

These publications contain more detailed information on both using portfolios and on more general aspects of SQA qualifications. They might be of use to you or to your assessor or your centre or organisation.

<b>title</b>	<b>edition and publication code</b>	<b>price</b>
<i>Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Training Providers and Employers</i>	<i>June 1999 A0842</i>	<i>Free</i>
<i>Guide to Assessing SVQs</i>	<i>April 1998 D0533</i>	<i>£15.00</i>
<i>Registration, Entries and Results: a procedural guide for centres</i>	<i>August 1999 A0944</i>	<i>£10.00</i>

SQA also supplies shell portfolios, a generic document which requires the insertion of standards. Further information can be obtained from Gillian MacFarlane on 0141-242 2095.

In addition, there are leaflets and information sheets on all SVQs which are currently available, as well as technical support material in many cases.

To order any of the publications listed, contact our Sales Section on 0141-242 2168 quoting the publication code.

## **Appendix 2**

### **SQA Contacts**

SQA Helpdesk	0141-242 2214
Sales Section	0141-242 2168
Portfolio Development	0141-242 2095
SVQ Accreditation	0141-242 2488

SQAs website: [www.sqa.org.uk/SVQ](http://www.sqa.org.uk/SVQ)

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